



## Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative

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### Early Care and Education Work Group - July 7, 2005 - 10 a.m. - 12 Noon

**Members Present:** Kelly Alexander, Donna Alliston, Marietta Baltz, Deborah Blackburn, Diana Courson, Geania Dickey, Jana Gifford, Dana Gonzales, Joanna Grymes, Thelma Jasper, Sue Martin, Vicki Mathews, Martha Reeder, Sandra Reifeiss, Vicki Shelby, Vicki Stearns, Dan Sullivan, Ratha Tracy, Jodi Veit-Edrington, Nancy Walker, and Paula C. Watson

**Regrets:** Jean Adair, Judy Clay, Traci A. Johnston, and Kathy Stegall.

### Agenda Item #1: Update - Strengthening Families Initiative - Martha Reeder

**Discussion:** The Strengthening Families Initiative Kick-Off Event on May 24 began with an informal meeting. Approximately 25 centers were represented at the event. Jean McIntosh and Wanda Newell attended the event on behalf of The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP). They have been very helpful throughout this program. There was an overflow turnout to the first session which was the training session. The Child Abuse Prevention Program aired at 7 p.m. that evening. It was well done and well received by those present. AETN had agreed to videotape the training session and made it available to us. It is "raw" footage with every thing that was part of the session. It was not edited in any way.

There are 16 applicants applying for the four Promising Practices Program (PPP). Every program that applied may become part of the network to work with families. The ones who participated are invited to be involved in the network. These are quality approved programs that may not be ready to apply to become a PPP.

A big part of the program is the self-assessment. We want the self-assessment completed in a non-threatening environment. The first thing involves working through the self-assessment one section at (next column)

a time. The Division plans to have conference calls with the network. The whole network will be expected to participate in a limited technical assistance provided by CSSP. The four programs will receive extra technical assistance.

Prior to the AR Early Childhood Association (AECA) Conference scheduled for October 13-15 in Hot Springs, at the Convention Center, the first technical assistance event will be held on October 12. The Division will provide scholarships to network members to attend the conference. Centers will be encouraged to bring a team, consisting of the center director, a staff member, and a parent to the SFI pre-conference event. Staff from the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) will provide the TA during this SFI pre-conference event. Some of the CSSP Exemplary Programs will also be represented at this event.

We want the network members to have a community partner. We will encourage them to bring their entire team. During the event, all parents will have an opportunity to meet together and all staff will have an opportunity. We will offer at least three scholarships to the AECA Conference, but they have to apply for these scholarships.

<b>Agenda Item #1, Continued: Update - Strengthening Families Initiative - Martha Reeder</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b> The reviewing team will consist of some the people in this room and others from DCCECE and some from DCFS. We were disappointed that there were not any applications from SE Arkansas. The applications are not as geographically located as we had hoped. The SFI Promising Practices Programs have the potential to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(next column)</p>	<p>be sort of a lab for quality. We can infuse into the four programs technical assistance from CSSP. We can help them strengthen community relationships. We can help them strengthen their association with the medical community. (In the process of applying for the VCHIP grant, we were able to enlist people from throughout the state related to clinics.</p>
<b>Agenda Item #2: Update - Reapplication - Final State Plan - Martha Reeder</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b> Arkansas' application MCHB was for additional AECCS planning funds. Arkansas chose not to apply for implementation funds since the state plan is not completed. In the reapplication guidance there were 17 components listed that must be in the final state implementation plan. In the handouts items in the <b>bold</b> print indicate the responses to the 17 components—listed verbatim from the application. Some are incomplete. Only one component indicates that we were not yet able to address in anyway.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(next column)</p>	<p><b>Timeline:</b> By <b>March 2006</b> we need to have a state plan that includes birth to 5 for all five work groups. The Medical Home and Social-Emotional Health Work Groups are working together on common concerns. Family Support and Parent Education are talking about the same thing.</p> <p>If you read through this handout you will find where this work groups fits in the components. Be sure to look at the goals that were set. We may need to do some sub-groups. Any plan that we come up with needs to go through the formal review process. You need to be aware that it may be changed.</p>
<b>Agenda Item #3: Logic Model - Goal Review</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b> The Goals were reviewed, assigned and discussed as follows:</p> <p><b>Item #1. Consistent and permanent funding is available for each care and education.</b> Up to DHS/DCCECE</p> <p><b>Item #2. A tiered system for licensing/accreditation is developed and implemented.</b> Vicky Shelby agreed to chair a sub-group. Further discussion will follow later in the meeting.</p> <p><b>Item #3. Developmental appropriate practices are implemented. Early childhood educators are knowledgeable of quality early childhood care. Diversified educational curricula are developed.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(next column)</p>	<p>This falls under Donna Alliston. Donna reported that Sherrill Archer now has responsibility for this committee. There is a curriculum list composed of "comprehensive" and "supplemental" curricula. This is being shared with other states. The Curriculum Review Committee needs to expand to 0 - 5 instead of just 3 - 5 curriculum.</p> <p>The evaluation of the system is going on—meeting July 22. They are collecting data and looking at it—evaluation.</p> <p><b>Item #4. Parents and public are aware of quality early education. Quality early childhood programs are available throughout the state.</b></p> <p>Public Relations is one goal that has not been</p>

**Agenda Item #3, Continued: Logic Model - Goal Review**

**Discussion:** touched. The family Support (FS) group has been working on a tool kit aimed at care-givers. They have decided to use SFI to develop the tool. At the event in May, a survey was distributed. The Family Support group is in the process of tweaking the survey for the network members to share with their parents in the fall. We hope to have information relative to the kinds of help that parents need.

Julie Munsell developed a communications plan specifically for SFI. AECCS needs to take advantage of this service in more than the SFI. Julie says that we need to get personal stories that can be used. We are looking at the parent piece that will allow parents to share their stories.

As soon as the SFI four programs are chosen, Julie is going to do a PR in those communities. When the tiered quality scale rolls out, there will need to be some kind of campaign.

**Item #5. Transitional Services are coordinated.**

Dee Cox, Vicky and Sandra serve on the "Ready Schools" Committee. This committee relates to transition services. Questions: Are the schools ready for new students? Schools need to work months in advance and throughout the year for transition to occur. It makes you look at your schools. There are pilot projects in five places. Each transition program is designed differently. The pilots were chosen from different parts of the state.

Vicky described the transition program in Pargould. There is a transition camp this summer—getting families ready, many with the same teachers as in their new classroom. There will be parent classes as part of the camp. They try to do a lot of different things during the camp. In the program, they coordinated with private pre-schools insuring that

the private pre-schools do not lose income during the camp. This year they promoted the camp. The parents are still paying for their services. They are picking up the kids at day care each day and taking them back to the day care at the end of the day. The children have to have some place to go back to after three weeks.

Surveys were done with parents and each parent was talked to before the child could enter the program. This year it is totally based on where they are going to school. The teachers that are not teaching at the camp, have the opportunity to come and meet the kids and their parents. Vicky talked with HIPPPY people but not other private based parent programs. The three-week camp is being paid for through a variety of things or funds.

Jody mentioned that in North Little Rock every year during transition test scores seem to go down.

What is exciting about the pilots is that every school must have an accepted plan under the Ready program. Each program is assessed and the results are sent off and scored to determine what schools need to work on for the program to be more successful.

Questions: What are the centers doing with the people who lose their students? Usually there is still a need for the staff, especially in small centers.

Suggested that it would be a good time for professional development to occur. Funds are not available to compensate for training. Private producers struggle with this also. In public schools stipends can be paid and there is professional development money. Reminded that some centers have had to be very creative with providing professional development related to time off.

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**Agenda Item #4: Designing a Tiered Quality Rating Scale (TQRS)**

**Discussion:** As stated above, Vicky has agreed to lead a sub-group to develop a working draft document—a proposed Quality Rating Scale (QRS) plan—to be brought back to the full work group for review and discussion and decision. The plan must be able to be used in a “pilot” situation. Elements of the plan should be able to be changed. The two page sheet previously designed on the tier system was distributed with the handouts as well as the “Conclusion” information (from Financing QRS Systems: Lessons Learned by Louise Stoney).

It was decided that the sub-group be composed of eight entities, Although two names may be designated to insure representation from that entity for every meeting, each entity will have only one vote. The following entities and entity representatives are listed below:

- ? Licensing - David Griffin/Ratha Tracy
- ? Quality Approval - Vicki Mathews
- ? Program Support/ABC - Kathy Stegall/Deniece Honeycutt
- ? Private Provider - Cara Walloch
- ? ABC/Quality Provider - Jody Veit-Edrington
- ? Special Needs - Thelma Jasper/Sandra Reifeiss
- ? CCR&R - Debbie Webb
- ? Program Review - Diana Courson

It was also suggested that a consultation group be formed. Suggested entities include the following:

- ? Parents (concerns of)
- ? Various types of Child Care Providers
- ? Family Child Care Association
- ? SFI Network
- ? Business Community—after plan is designed
- ? 2-4 Year Colleges (higher education)
- ? Vouchers - Family Support Unit
- ? Professional Development
- ? ERS Reviewers
- ? Others as the Work Requires

(next column)

This group would allow the sub-group to obtain input on special matters. The “Consultation Group” will be a sitting group and will be kept informed during the process about results of meetings. They will also be allowed the privilege/responsibility of replying and responding to the planning process.

The consultants will be invited to the meetings as observers, and public response will be invited in the last 15 minutes of each meeting (except the first one). When their specific area of concern is addressed in the agenda, the consultants will be notified and may be requested to address the group.

Arkansas needs to come up with its own plan considering the various types of programs.

It was suggested that the sub-group in the initial meeting plan the topics they plan to work on for each meeting in order for the consultants to decide to participate. Before the meeting there may need to be some ground work related to the process. The first meeting needs to handle the details of who is going to do it and who is going to be responsible for reporting to the consultants. There needs to be a process. The duties and responsibilities need to be defined clearly.

**It was suggested that the small group meet sometime during the first week of August:**

✍ **DATE: August 5, 2005**

✍ **TIME: 10 a.m.**

✍ **PLACE: Thompson Library**

**Bring calendars to set up future meetings for the sub-group.**

Sub-group plan Completion Date: **November 1.**

It was suggest that Karen Beaton be included as a private provider.

**Early Care and Education Work Group**

**Date: July 7, 2005**

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**Agenda Item #5: Miscellaneous - Next Meeting Date - Adjournment**

**Discussion:** Dana mentioned a small grant in which she is interesting in applying: The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) will provide up to \$5,000 in funding to grassroots community- and faith-based victim service organizations and coalitions to improve outreach and services to crime victims, through support of program development, networking, coalition building, and service delivery. Funds may be used to develop program literature, train advocates, produce a newsletter, support victim outreach efforts, and recruit volunteers.

**Members of the Early Care and Education Work Group were asked to bring their calendars to the next meeting in order to select meeting dates through December 2005.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**Result: Next Meeting Date**

**Date: Wednesday, September 14, 2005**

**Time: 10 a.m.**

**Place: Rebsamen Regional Medical Center  
Education Building - Room 1 and 2  
1400 Braden Street  
Jacksonville, AR 72076**

**TASKS:**